

# WFC Flyer



Niagara Falls from the air, one of the many beautiful sights in our region easily seen by pilots (Chris Houston)

## Important Dates:

**General Meeting**  
April 11, 2024  
WFC Clubhouse

**Board Meeting**  
May 2, 2024  
WFC Clubhouse

**General Meeting**  
May 9, 2024  
WFC Clubhouse

## Inside This Issue:

- President's Desk, p1
- 2024 Activities Committee Update, p2
- Cool Places to Fly: Slatington, p4
- Calendar, p7
- Congratulations, p7

## Williamson Flying Club Newsletter

### April 2024

### From the President's Desk by Scott Lasky

As the spring season takes flight, I am filled with enthusiasm for the adventures that await us in the skies above. April brings with it a sense of renewal and the perfect opportunity to embrace the joy of flying.

As we look ahead to the coming month, there are several exciting events coming up. Our calendar is brimming with opportunities for members to sharpen their skills, connect with fellow aviation enthusiasts, and explore new horizons.

One highlight of April will undoubtedly be the solar eclipse. I am writing this the day before the big event. We have a full ramp reserved and I am looking forward to an exciting day. I want to address the

closing of the runway a half hour before and after the eclipse. We will have a lot of people in the ramp area and they will be looking up at the sky instead of at airplanes on the ground. So we decided to close it for safety reasons.



The Activities Committee has been hard at work planning events for the season. Our annual dinner flight to the Runway Bar & Grill (Bradford Regional Airport, Kbfd) is planned for the end of April (April 27 with April 26 planned in the event of an unfavorable forecast). This has been our most popular flying event of the last two seasons. There is also an overnight trip to Mackinac island in Michigan planned for the end of May. Invitations and details

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Williamson Flying Club

Williamson-Sodus Airport (KSDC)  
5502 State Route 104  
Williamson, NY 14589

Find us on the web at:  
[www.williamsonflyingclub.com](http://www.williamsonflyingclub.com)

## Board of Directors

President: Scott Lasky  
Vice President: Dave Lowry  
Secretary: Paula Sippel  
Treasurer: Bob Herloski

Past President: Bob Fratangelo  
Director, 2022: Gilead Biggie  
Director, 2023: Dave Perricone  
Director, 2024: Bill Black

Contact: [bod@williamsonflyingclub.com](mailto:bod@williamsonflyingclub.com)

*“As we embark on this journey together, let us remember the importance of safety, respect, and camaraderie in everything we do. Our club is not just a collection of individuals; we are a tight-knit community united by our love for flying.”*

## Aviation Quote

“Get rid at the outset of the idea that the airplane is only an air-going sort of automobile. It isn't. It may sound like one and smell like one, and it may have been interior decorated to look like one; but the difference is — it goes on wings.”

— Wolfgang Langewiesche, *Stick and Rudder* (1944)

## From the President's Desk by Scott Lasky

*(Continued from page 1)*

for both events have already been distributed through aSoS. Keep an eye on your email for invites to other events. The Activities Committee will also provide updates in the newsletter and at member meetings.

As we embark on this journey together, let us remember the importance of safety, respect, and camaraderie in everything we do. Our club is not just a collection of individuals; we are a tight-knit community united by our love for

flying. Let's continue to support and uplift one another as we pursue our shared passion for aviation.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering dedication to our club. Together, we will soar to new heights and make this April a month to remember.

Blue skies and tailwinds,

Scott Lasky

## Activities Committee Update by Chris Houston

[Last month](#), we described what the Activities Committee is all about, how we spread the word on our planned events, and how you can get involved. As always, if you have questions about event details or how to join in, please feel free to reach out to any member of the committee.

For this month, we have a preview of all planned events for 2024 (see the

sidebar on the next page) and provide some details on near term events.

April and May events are:

**Saturday, April 27, Dinner at the Runway Bar & Grill, Bradford Regional Airport (Kbfd)**

For the past two years, this has been

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Call for Submissions

- Have you flown someplace interesting? Maybe even someplace that we could describe as “cool”?
- Did you snap a great aviation or WFC-related picture?
- Do you have a fun flying story to share?
- Would you care to be featured in a Member Spotlight article?

The newsletter is always looking for input from WFC members. If you have something to share, let us know! Don't want to write anything? We'll help! Reach out to Chris Houston through a.S.o.S. if you would like to contribute to the newsletter!

## Activities Committee 2024 Update by Chris Houston

*(Continued from page 2)*

our most popular event with 22 members, friends, and family joining in last year.

Dinner reservations at the always-excellent Runway Bar & Grill will be for 6:00 pm. For more information, see Cool Places to Fly in the [January 2022 edition of the WFC Flyer](#). For menus, see the restaurant's [Facebook page](#). The flight home will be at night, so be sure to refresh your night currency before joining. Fuel is currently available at \$6.49/gal.

Invitations to this event have already been distributed by aSoS. Be sure to RSVP so that we have an accurate headcount for the reservation. Any questions on this event should be directed to Gilead Biggie.

### May 11, Montauk (KMTP)

Montauk is the easternmost municipality in New York state, situated at the east end of Long Island and surrounded by sandy beaches. We will target lunch in this beauti-

ful setting. For more information about Montauk, see Cool Places to Fly in the [September 2022 edition of the WFC Flyer](#).

Expect more details soon. Contact Dan Van Huben with questions on this event.

### May 26-28, Mackinac Island (KMCD) and Sleeping Bear Dunes

Our annual overnight trip this year will be to the unique [Mackinac Island](#) in northern Michigan. Set in the waters of Lake Huron, Mackinac Island can only be reached by boat or aircraft and, once on the island, motorized vehicular traffic is prohibited. Taxis are horse-

*(Continued on page 4)*



Aerial of the Montauk Airport taken October 2022.



The WFC invaded Bradford, PA on May 6, 2023. Spoils included some excellent prime rib!

## Planned 2024 Activities Committee Events

### Non-Flying Events

- Aug 17, Annual WFC picnic
- Nov 2, Glenn Curtiss Museum
- Nov 16, ROC ATC facility tour
- TBD, Annual holiday party

### Flying Events

- Apr 27, Dinner, Runway Bar & Grill, Bradford Regional (KBFD)
- May 11, Lunch, Montauk (KMTP)
- May 26-28, Annual overnight trip, Mackinac Island (KMCD) and Sleeping Bear Dunes
- Jun 9, NYC skyline tour
- Jun 22, Piper Aviation Museum at Piper Memorial Airport (KLHV)
- Jul 13, Block Island (KBID)
- Jul 27, College Park Airport (KCGS)
- Aug 9, Dinner, Lippy's Bar & Grill, Greene Airport (4N7)
- Aug 24, Star Trek Original Series Set Tour, Ticonderoga (4B6)
- Sep 7, Lunch, Red Mill Restaurant, Basin Harbor (B06)
- Sep 22, Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, Kingston-Ulster Airport (20N)
- Oct 5, Lunch, Lake Placid (KLKP)
- Oct 19, Annual BBQ lunch at Benton Airport (PA40)

## Activities Committee 2024 Update by Chris Houston

(Continued from page 3)

drawn and most people get around on foot or by bicycle. As Michigan's first state park, it is a beautiful place, a jewel of the Great Lakes, and steeped in interesting history. Also, there is fudge.

This trip will include a day at the [Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore](#), the largest freshwater dune system in the world. We will also engage in some aerial sightseeing and Great Lakes island hopping.

Tentative schedule:

- **May 26:** Depart KSDC, fly to KMCD. We'll enjoy lunch, sightseeing, and dinner on the island.
- **May 27:** Fly to Traverse City

(KTVC) for ground transportation to Sleeping Bear. Aerial sightseeing. Island exploration.

- **May 28:** Return to SDC. Potential return activities include lunch at [WACO Kitchen](#) in Battle Creek's WACO Aviation biplane factory and a Detroit River skyline fly-by.

For more details about Mackinac Island and Sleeping Bear Dunes, see Cool Places to Fly in the [March 2024 edition of the WFC Flyer](#). An article about WACO Kitchen can be found in the [August 2022 WFC Flyer](#).

Invitations for this event have already been released to club members through aSoS and [more details about the itinerary can be found attached to the calendar](#). Be

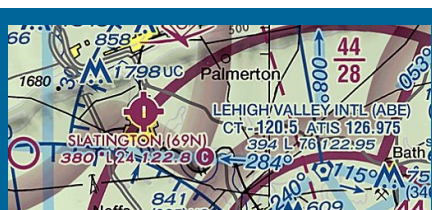
sure to RSVP so that we know you're going! Contact Chris Houston with any questions about this event.

As always, if you're interested in participating in any event but need a ride or require help using the aSoS event calendar, or simply have questions about any of the events, please feel free to reach out to the committee.

The 2024 Activities Committee is:

- Mike Abate
- Gilead Biggie
- Jonathan Fuss
- Chris Houston
- Scott Lasky
- Dan Probst (Chair)
- Dan Van Huben

## Cool Places to Fly: Slatington Airport by Chris Houston



### Destination:

Slatington Airport (69N),  
Slatington, PA

### Distance:

163 nautical miles, direct

### Why It's Cool:

- Scenic, challenging field
- Walking / bicycling trails and the Slatington Farmer's Market located adjacent to the airport

In this space, I usually write about airports that have on-field restaurants, museums, or otherwise provide excellent access to interesting metropolitan areas. Slatington Airport (69N) in Slatington, Pennsylvania offers none of these things.

Instead, visitors to Slatington will encounter a challenging field with a friendly, grass roots aviation culture. Hiking and cycling opportunities are directly adjacent to the airport in the form of miles of trails. Hungry aviators will find the Slatington Farmer's Market immediately west of the airport with a wide variety of food offerings. Oh, and visitors will also find a curious airplane graveyard, but we'll get to that later.

Located at the northwest edge of Allentown's class Charlie airspace in a slight bend of the Lehigh River, Slatington is challenging because of a combination of less-than-ample runway and being completely surrounded by high terrain. The 2455 x 50 foot runway includes a displaced threshold on runway 1 that further shortens the useful landing distance by an additional 352 feet due to trees. Overall, the airport would not present much of a challenge if it were located in flat, clearcut farm country.

However, operating from this facility is complicated by some serious surrounding terrain. The airport is

(Continued on page 5)

## Cool Places to Fly: Slatington Airport by Chris Houston

*(Continued from page 4)*

directly south of the Lehigh Gap, a break in a roughly 1700 foot high east-west oriented ridgeline that allows the Lehigh River to flow from north to south. For anyone who has driven through the Lehigh Tunnel on I-476, it passes through this very ridge just northwest of Slatington. This makes the airport challenging to find when approaching from the north and inbound pilots will need to manage their altitude thoughtfully.

Although the ridgeline north of the airport is the most obvious terrain threat, the airport sits at an elevation of 380 feet with higher elevations — including the town of Slatington itself — all around it. Flying a standard 1000' traffic pattern for runway 1 will not provide as much vertical separation from buildings in town as most pilots will expect.

On departure, it becomes very obvious that the airport is in a bowl. Launching from runway 1 puts the ridgeline containing the Lehigh Gap a mere mile from the departure end of the runway and a turn away from that looming terrain cannot be made until the terrain on both sides has been outclimbed. A high performance take-off is recommended here. Also, exercise caution on days with a strong northerly wind that will surely create a downdraft on the departure leg from runway 1 just when you least want it.

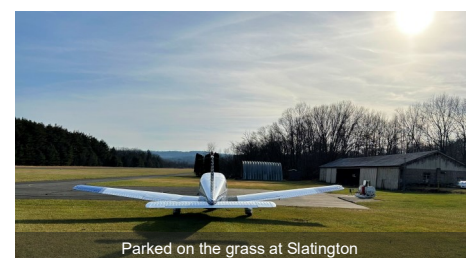
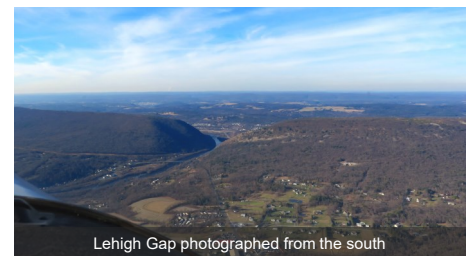
With those caveats aside, visitors will find Slatington to be a friendly aeronautical destination. There are few paved surfaces for parking,

but the grass adjacent to the airport's FBO building is smooth and contains tie-down anchors for transient parking. The local EAA chapter has loaner bicycles on site that may be used to explore the nearby trails. They are stored in a locked brown shed that can be opened with knowledge of the field's CTAF. The shed is located toward the south end of the airport building and adjacent to a Quonset hut.

Once I landed and found a suitable parking spot, I was welcomed to the airport by owner / manager Roger Sell who strongly recommended I investigate the Slatington Farmers Market for lunch. This former manufacturing facility for Keystone Lamp was repurposed as a farmers market in June of 2022. As I approached, I scented the smoky aromas of various foods being prepared and my stomach audibly rumbled. Based on the savory fragrance, I knew that I was in the right place. Within Slatington's Farmers Market, stalls are available for people to sell various wares in addition to several quick casual eateries established in more permanent bays. Food options included True Blue Mediterranean Express, Takkii Ramen, the Pizza and Burger Hub, Uncle Jay's BBQ, and more. I enjoyed a tasty lamb gyro from True Blue.

The D&L Trail runs north to south along the western boundary of the airport. Created from the former railbed of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, the trail runs from Wilkes-Barre to Bristol, PA. Rather than borrow a bicycle, I walked a couple of miles north on the trail where I

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Cool Places to Fly: Slatington Airport by Chris Houston

(Continued from page 5)

found some additional hiking trails along the higher terrain flanking the Lehigh Gap.

When I first landed at the airport, I noticed that the trees along the western airport boundary were filled with the carcasses of dead airplanes. Few pilots can resist this kind of sight and I went to investigate. A few of the wrecks had obviously been there for some time considering that stout trees had grown up through some of them.

In chatting with a local pilot, I learned that Roger Sell's father used to run an aircraft salvage business out of Slatington. Though no longer in operation, the

wrecked aircraft inventory remains. The pilot shared a story with me about how first time student pilots would often become quiet when seeing the line of wrecked aircraft for the first time. The brave ones would ultimately ask, "Did all of those airplanes crash...*here?*"

"Not a one," he would tell them truthfully.

Slatington is a wonderful little airport off the beaten path that offers a friendly atmosphere, a bit of a challenge in landing and taking off, great recreational opportunities on the D&L Trail, and some diverse food options at the Farmers Market. It is truly a hidden gem.

### Tips:

- Due to challenging terrain, the airport is NOTAMed closed to transients from sunset to sunrise — no night operations are allowed for transients.
- Fuel is available (currently, \$7.00/gal), but is full serve only. If you think you might need fuel here, call in advance to ensure that the FBO will be open: 610-767-5881.
- Due to the terrain, avoidance of this airport on windy days is recommended. The location of the ridge north of the field is a recipe for strong downdrafts at the airport when the wind is northerly.



Turning left base for runway 1 over Slatington.



The Slatington Farmers Market was packed with people.



Lehigh River from the D&L Trail.



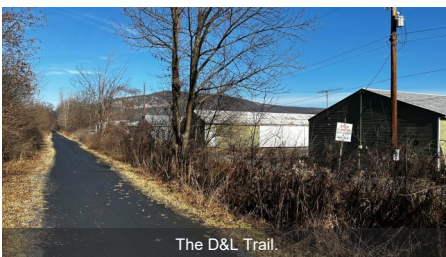
My airplane with the Lehigh Gap visible in the near distance.



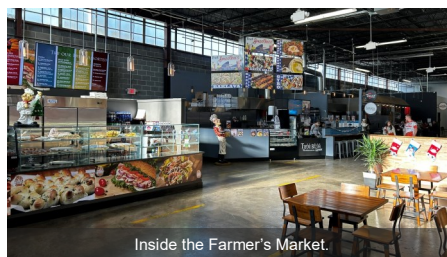
Some of the food stands at the Farmers Market.



I chatted with the pilot of this '47 Champ for a while.



The D&L Trail.



Inside the Farmer's Market.



I think these wings have been here a while.

## Congratulations!



Congratulations to Eric Swart on earning his Private Pilot certificate on March 13!



## Images submitted by Gilead Biggie

On April 8, 2024, the Williamson Sodus Airport was in the path of totality for a solar eclipse. Roughly 30 pilots from outside of our local area reserved slots at KSDC to view the eclipse and, even though the day was overcast, 20+ aircraft still came. Online comments from our visitors were complimentary of our airport and the welcome they received from club members!



## Upcoming WFC and Local Events

Saturday April 13	CPR and AED certification class at the Williamson Sodus Airport. Presented by Duane Sims and Rob Langenbahn. Certified Instructor and WFC Member Rob Langenbahn will ensure you are trained and able to act with confidence with this hands on CPR Class and AED Demonstration. Limited Room Available. Small fee for Certification. See the WFC Event Calendar to RSVP.
Saturday April 20	Fly-in Chili-Fest at the Lt Warren C Eaton Airport (KOIC) in Norwich, NY. 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. All welcome, pot luck serving. No charge. Visitors are encouraged, but not required to share their favorite chili or side dish.
Saturday April 27	<b>WFC fly-out to the Runway Bar &amp; Grill at the Bradford Regional Airport (KBFD). Dinner reservations at 6:00 pm. Please RSVP by the Event Calendar so that we can get an accurate headcount. Contact Gilead Biggie with any questions or ride requests. Rain date: Friday, April 26.</b>
Saturday May 11	<b>WFC fly-out to Montauk (KMTP) for lunch. Stay tuned for details. Contact Dan Van Huben with questions or ride requests. Rain date: Sunday, May 12.</b>
Saturday May 11	Fly-in breakfast, Wellsville Municipal Airport (KELZ), Wellsville, NY. 8:00 am–noon. All you can eat pancakes, sausage, eggs, juice, and coffee. Adults \$10, children under 5 free.
Saturday May 18	Fly-in breakfast, Kline Kill Airport (NY1), Ghent, NY. 8:00 am–noon. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, OJ, coffee. \$10. Turf only, 4000 feet.
Sunday May 19	58th Williamson Flying Club Apple Blossom Festival pancake breakfast fly-in. WFC members will be expected to volunteer for this event.
Sunday– Tuesday May 26–27	<b>WFC fly-out to Mackinac Island (KMCD) and the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. More details on this trip available earlier in this issue. Please RSVP by the aSoS Event Calendar so that we can get an accurate headcount. Contact Chris Houston with questions of ride requests.</b>
Monday May 27	Pancake breakfast fly-in, Akron Jesson Field (9G3), Akron, NY. 8:00 am-noon. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, coffee, and juice. Adults \$10, kids 5-12 \$5, kids under 5 eat free.

Items in **bold** are sponsored by the WFC Activities Committee